

PRIORITY MAIL

By Judy DiEdwardo

South Florida's 10 Most

Listen up, ladies: If you think that JFK Junior was the last of the truly great eligible bachelors, dry those baby blues and read on. We did a little homework and discovered an impressive group of men in our own back yard. From the fields of politics and business to law and sports, may we introduce...

Thomas W. Barlow

Age: 44

Occupation: Government Affairs Manager,
Florida Power & Light Co.

Home: Palm Beach Gardens

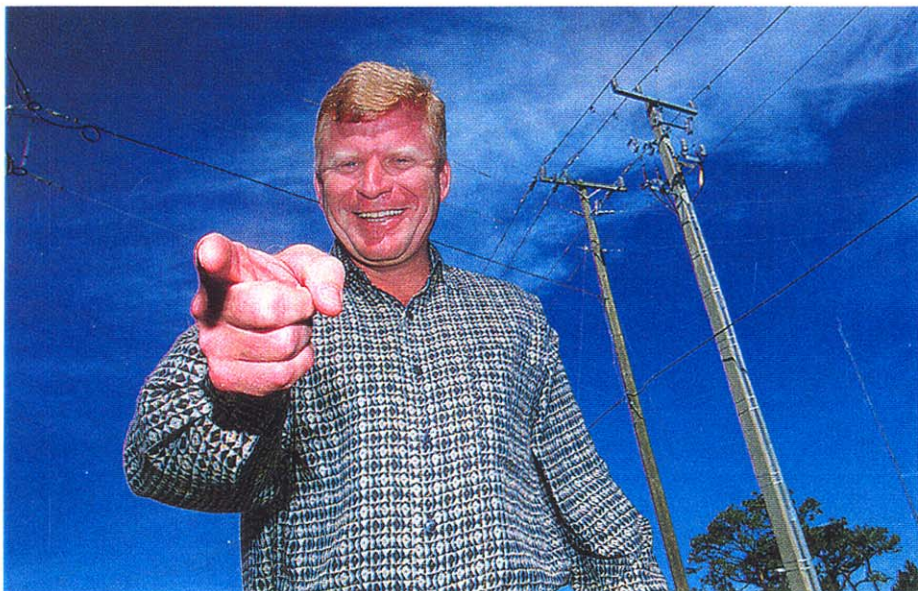
As lead environmental negotiator and political advocate for one of the largest and fastest-growing electric utility companies in the

country, Tom Barlow has one thing on his mind: Protecting the interests of Florida Power & Light before state and national regulators and legislators.

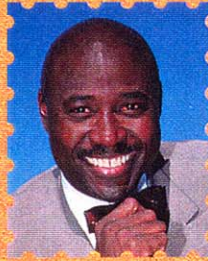
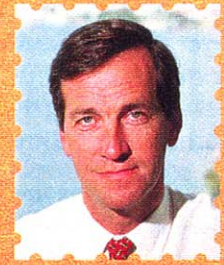
A 17-year veteran of the electric utility business, Barlow is no stranger to the hallowed halls of Tallahassee's Rotunda. Armed with diplomatic acumen, street-smart savvy, and a reputation for being a knowledgeable and effective communicator, he enjoys a strong presence and widespread popularity. Add to that a warm Southern disposition, wholesome good looks and a sturdy handshake, and you have the RoboCop of lobbyists.

"I truly enjoy what I do," smiles the red-headed Kentuckian, born in Detroit but raised in the picturesque commonwealth. Barlow's interest in environmental studies was sparked during his undergraduate years in Western Kentucky University's engineering program. He went on to receive a master's degree in environmental engineering from Vanderbilt University.

"It's challenging and rewarding when you can make a difference by solving problems and working with others toward common goals," says Barlow. "I imagined I'd be burned out by now, but instead it's just the opposite. I truly love the process."



ANDREW ITKOFF



Fascinating Single Men

John Michael Evert

Age: 36

Occupation: President, Evert Seguso Bassett Tennis Center Inc.; Managing Director, Tennis Academy

Home: Boca Raton

Growing up in anyone's shadow is tough. But when that shadow belongs to an internationally heralded tennis star, the challenges are even greater. Just ask John Evert, younger brother of tennis great Chris Evert. An accomplished athlete himself, he quickly rose to the top of junior tennis rankings. But the limelight at center court was never meant to be his.

"I've had to struggle to find my niche. Sometimes I wonder if I gave tennis my best shot—if I got the most out of my talent," he says wistfully. "I know I could have played on the [professional] circuit. I certainly had the ability and the aspirations. But I don't think I was prepared to make it my entire life—to give 100 percent to tennis."

Instead, Evert studied economics and business at Vanderbilt University. After graduating, he joined the International Management Group in Cleveland, Ohio, where he enjoyed a successful 10-year career managing and coaching some of the world's top tennis professionals, including Jennifer Capriati, Mary-Jo Fernandez, Pam Shriver, Zina Garrison and sister Chrissie.



In 1993, he returned to his native South Florida to manage Saddlebrook Resort's Harry Hopman Tennis Academy, fine-tuning and refocusing his next dream. Last year, he took a major step toward its accomplishment, teaming up with sister Chris to add the Evert name to the then-struggling four-year-old Seguso Bassett Tennis Center at Mission Bay.

"What's so exciting about this project is that it goes beyond tennis," says Evert, his eyes flashing with excitement. "My ultimate dream is to build the world's best junior tennis facility."

Lester Finney

Age: 39

Occupation: Founder/Director,
Neighborhood Buddies Inc.

Home: Belle Glade

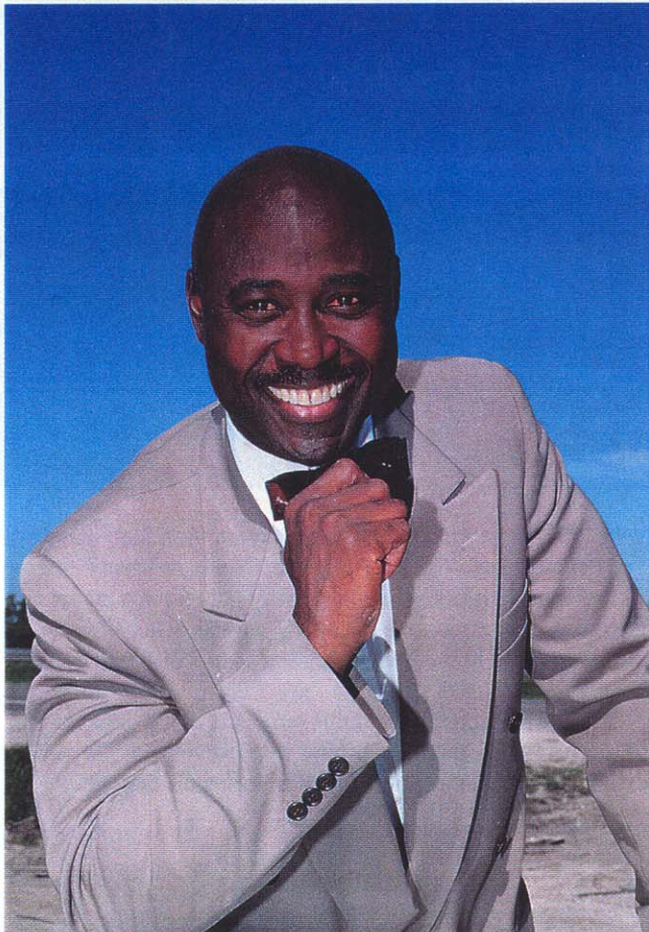
Growing up is fraught with challenges; growing up in Belle Glade is fraught with more. No one knows that better than Lester Finney, who, thanks to the stern guidance of a loving mother and supportive role models, steered clear of the city's troubled streets and headed for a brighter future.

A football scholarship brought Finney to McPherson, Kansas, where he earned a bachelor's degree in art from McPherson College. The experience was eye-opening.

"When I left my home for the first time, I knew nothing of the world around me," says Finney. "You can't see much from Belle Glade. There wasn't even a movie theater. But each time I returned home during school breaks, I brought a piece of the outside world back with me. The kids looked up to me. I could see that my life was having a positive influence on their lives. It was then I knew my life's work."

Returning home after college, he was quickly recruited to teach art classes at Glades Central High School. In 1985, Finney organized Neighborhood Buddies, a grassroots after-school program that currently meets at his "Customized T-Shirts and Etc." shop.

"Just being here for these kids is my greatest reward. We're like a family and the Neighborhood Buddies center is their living room—a safe, nurturing place where they can come after school to paint or draw or listen to music or simply talk," says Finney. "We also help these kids channel their talents and interests into careers, giving them hope for a future—and the confidence to get there."



Dean Andrew Kantis

Age: 27

Occupation: Entrepreneur/Actor

Home: Deerfield Beach

Imagine tuning in to a local television program that takes you to everything from the trendiest new restaurants, clubs and shops in town, to the area's best places for family fun. That's what Dean Kantis and partner Antonio Piedra had in mind when they decided to produce and host "The Hot Spot TV Show," a travel show. And if the idea proves successful, they hope to franchise "Hot Spot" throughout the country.

To those who know Kantis, this is no surprise. With degrees in business administration and marketing, and an unflappable belief in himself, the St. Louis native's resume reads like one of a man who never believed there was anything he couldn't do. From running his own landscaping company while in high school, to selling real-estate advertising while in college, to working as salesman and speaker for a national marketing firm. All by the age of 24.

In 1994, he turned his attention to acting and modeling. Appearances as a film and TV "extra" included roles in "The Bird Cage," "Striptease," "Fair Game" and "Donnie Brasco." Despite his budding success in front of the camera, Kantis' attention has turned once again—this time, to the producer's chair.

"Napoleon Hill's *Think and Grow Rich* was the single most important book that changed my life," he says. "It taught me how to be happy and successful—how to establish goals and achieve them."

Bennett C. Creed III

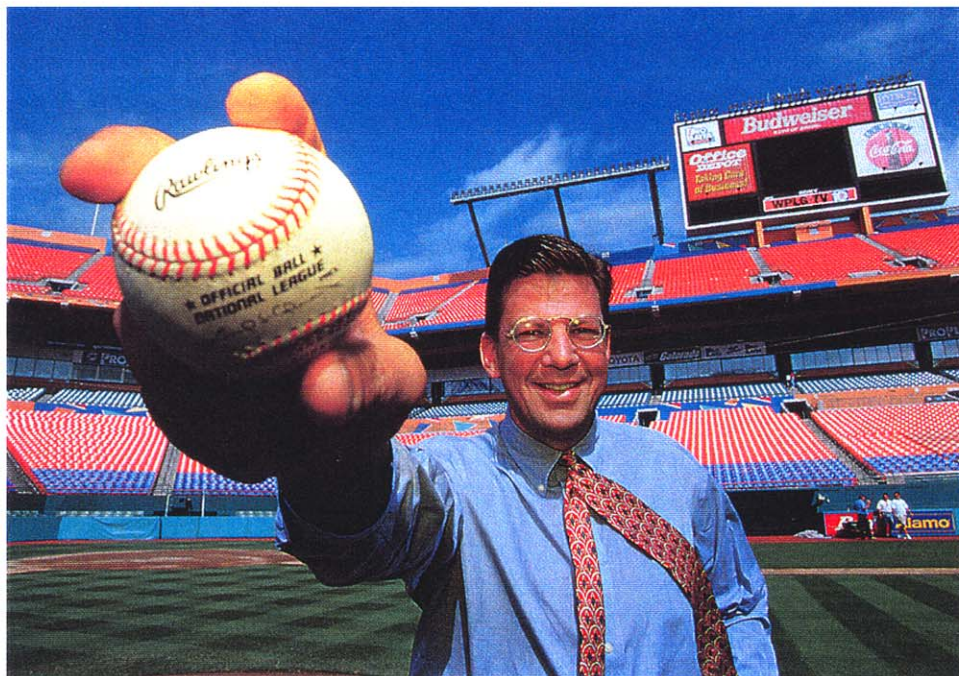
Age: 44

Occupation: Director of
Marketing Partnerships,
Florida Marlins Baseball Club
Home: Coconut Grove

Ben Creed's rise from baseball's minor leagues to Wayne Huizenga's Florida Marlins in three years could be considered a baseball record. And it would have, had the lean, 6-foot-2 Chicago native ever played the game. Instead, Creed occupies a seat in the VIP section at Pro Player Stadium, hitting home runs for franchise sponsors and advertisers who piggyback their products and services on the Marlins name.

"I'm the guy who goes out to the corporate community and sells Hat Day and Bat Day and all the signage in the outfield," says Creed, who, two years ago, had the stadium's two 60-foot-tall foul poles painted to look like pencils for an Office Depot campaign. "By developing promotions and then finding underwriters for those programs, it's a win-win for everyone involved."

Creed's affinity for baseball began as it did for many kids: at Chicago's famed Wrigley Field, where he and his father watched their beloved Cubs play the national pastime. "My original goal in life was to own the Cubs, but I was about



\$30 million short," he smiles. "I wanted to be the first owner to take them to the World Series. Actually, I still have that chance. With inflation, now I'm now only about \$150 million short."

"I absolutely love being a part of professional baseball. It's still a thrill to walk out onto the field each night, to walk through the tunnel among so many great players, to have been there last May when Al Leiter threw a no-hitter—the first in Marlins history. There's nothing like it."



Jeffrey D. Jackson

Age: 35

Occupation: Interim Executive Director,
Tri-County Commuter Rail Authority
(Tri-Rail)

Home: Fort Lauderdale

Each day nearly 10,000 South Florida commuters count on Jeff Jackson to do his job: ensuring that all 180 trains making

the 110-minute trip from Miami to Mangonia Park each week run smoothly and on time.

"We have a lot of people at Tri-Rail who are railroad enthusiasts," says Jackson, "but I am not one of them. I am fascinated by the business."

A graduate of Indiana University, Jackson's interest in mass transit wasn't fueled by a childhood train set. It was sparked by a college professor who encouraged him to choose a specialty within the urban affairs curriculum in which he was enrolled. Jackson worked with transit authorities in Tampa and Orlando before making the move to Tri-Rail's Fort Lauderdale headquarters, where he directs the company's \$100 million budget to oversee daily operations, maintenance and future development.

"The thing I most enjoy about my job is playing a role in redeveloping our station sites and making them more attractive for mixed-use development. And if we're trying to encourage development at our stations, we need to lead by example."

In 1998, Tri-Rail will take on that leadership role by relocating its administrative offices to a new 45,000-square-foot facility attached to the Glades Road station in Boca Raton.

"Delivering the same level of service to our customers every day is a challenge," smiles Jackson, "but it's one I truly enjoy."



ANDREW ITKOFF

Garrison duPont Lickle

Age: 43

Occupation: Partner/Attorney, Gunster, Yoakley, Valdes-Fauli & Stewart, P.A.

Home: Palm Beach

If you look under the “L” listing of *Who’s Who Among Rising Young Americans* you’ll find Gary Lickle’s name—a fixture there since 1991, when he added his name to *Who’s Who in American Lawyers*. And then there are his social, civic and professional affiliations with financial, educational and civic boards countrywide.

This affable self-starter, hailing from one of the country’s oldest dynastic families and raised amid the manicured lawns and sprawling estates of northern Delaware, has been a leader at several organizations devoted to community enrichment and preservation efforts. Among his most recent involvements, he sat at the helm of the Beach Protection Board for the Town of Palm Beach, which was convened to develop a solution to its eroding shoreline.

An avid pilot and aviation aficionado, Lickle periodically escapes from his fifth-floor law office at Phillips Point to exchange the picture-perfect view of the Intracoastal and Palm Beach for higher ground aboard his twin-engine Cessna. And when he’s not in the skies, he can be found navigating the islands of the Bahamas aboard his 39-foot boat “No Way” with 14-year-old daughter Sasha and 16-year-old son Cameron.

Says Lickle, “I am happiest and most at home on my boat enjoying life with my children—by far my two greatest accomplishments.”

Bobby Genovese

Age: 34

Occupation: President, BG Capital Group

Home: Boca Raton and Nassau, Bahamas

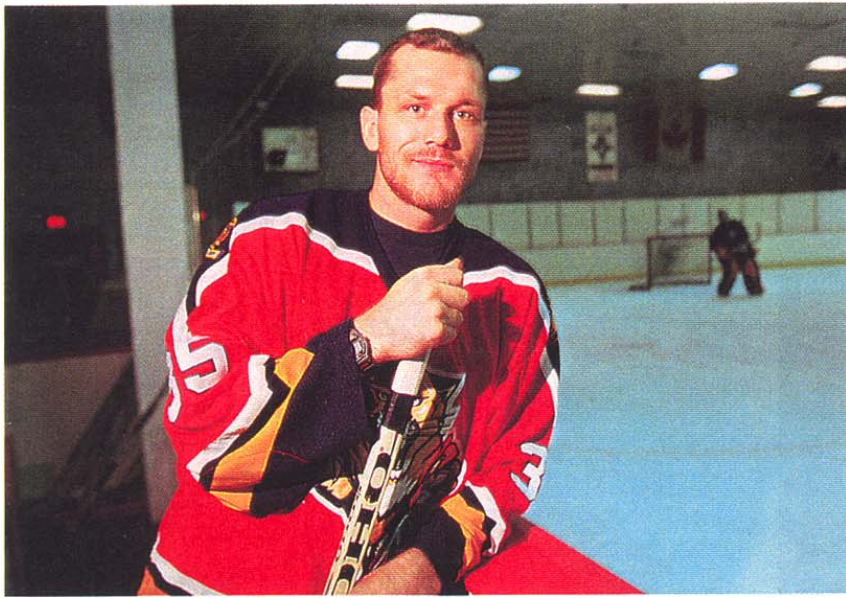
Armed with a penchant for picking winners and high-powered marketing savvy, Bobby Genovese has a lot to smile about these days, far from the horse stables of northern Ontario where he grew up.

The fast-paced world of capitalistic matchmaking seems almost to have been Genovese’s destiny. He left school to work with his father, who sat at the helm of a lucrative family-run wildflower seed business. It was there he first realized his natural flair for marketing.

With a ninth-grade education, an indefatigable hunger to succeed and a lot of common sense, this handsome, self-styled entrepreneur founded his first company at age 25, when he moved to Vancouver and formed the Investor Relations Group to help privately held companies compete in the public arena. Last year, Genovese opened IRG’s Boca Raton office and created the Bahama-based BG Capital Group, where he now concentrates his efforts. That is, when he’s not at Royal Palm Polo, where he has assembled his own high-goal polo team after learning to play the game last year.

“I’m doing it for the love of being back on horses. It’s added a whole new dimension to my life. We’re a very young, aggressive, bunch of 30-something guys who are out to prove that we’re worth another look,” smiles Genovese. “The goal? To become the best.”





Terry Carkner

Age: 31

Occupation: Defensiveman, Florida Panthers

Home: Boca Raton

Far from the population-2,000 agricultural farming community of Winchester, Ontario, where he and his two brothers grew up playing hockey on a makeshift backyard ice rink,

Terry Carkner is very much at home in a jersey for Florida's Panthers.

He grimaces at words like "passion" and "desire" when describing his motivation to play hockey. "It's just fun. It always has been," he offers instead.

Carkner competed on his first organized team at age seven and went on to develop a level of play that caught the eye of junior league coaches. At 18, the handsome, 6-foot-3-inch, 210-pound defensiveman entered hockey nirvana as a first-round draft pick by the New York Rangers.

"It was all pretty dreamlike in the beginning. My family and I drove to Montreal for the draft. Getting called was a thrill."

Several trades later, Carkner was released as a free agent and signed with the Panthers. His timing couldn't have been better. The following year (the team's second) the Panthers were in contention for the Stanley Cup and Panther fever swept South Florida.

Although they didn't prove to be the victors, the young team's accomplishment was inspirational.

"I think we proved last year that we're the kind of team that once we get in the playoffs we can be successful," says Carkner. "Either way, though, I won't leave this game any less of a person for not having a [championship] ring on my finger. After all, I just love the game."

Bob Burg

Age: 39

Occupation: Motivational Speaker/Author

Home: Jupiter

Never say no to Bob Burg. The self-made salesman-turned-television-anchor-turned-nationally-recognized-motivational-speaker-and-author doesn't know the meaning of the word. And he isn't shy about telling the world how it, too, can realize its greatest dreams.

Growing up in the Greater Boston area, Burg's dream of being a sportscaster gained solid ground when a small, Oklahoma TV station hired him as 10 o'clock news anchor. Ironically, it was off-camera that Burg found his true love: selling advertising for the station.

"I loved sales and studied everything I could get my hands on. I learned there's no such thing as a natural-born salesperson. It's an acquired skill that requires work."

And work he did. After leaving the station, Burg launched his next career. A member of the National Speakers Association, he travels internationally. Articles he's written have been published worldwide and he has authored *The Memory System*; *Endless Referrals: Network Your Everyday Contacts Into Sales*; and, most recently, *Network Your Way To Endless Romance*. *Winning Without Intimidation* is planned for publication later this year.

The components of success, says Burg, are simple and effective and, when applied, the results are predictable: Program yourself for success. Don't accept limitations. Write down your goals and work hard for your dream.

"I'm living proof that anyone can have it all." ♦

